

midnight, ensuring that every single thing in this bill has been looked over carefully to make sure that we got it right.

And we are getting it right tonight for the American people, for our economy, and for the future of our great country.

I yield to my colleague from Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

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H.R. 3684

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I also want to, first of all, thank all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Senator SINEMA and Senator PORTMAN have taken the lead. I want to thank them both—and Senator PORTMAN for taking at least 40 seconds of my time to enumerate all of our colleagues who were part of this effort.

I also want to thank the staff and acknowledge, as he did, the incredibly important role the White House played. At some point in this process, the White House realized that they couldn't just support this initiative, but they actually had to own it, and they were intimately involved in all of the details, and it is something that I know they will share with all my Democratic colleagues.

I also want to thank the majority leader. He has given us the time we need to get here, to get a 3,000—close to a 3,000-page bill to this floor, this comprehensive. I know it has taken a little more time than, maybe, all of us thought, but the fact is we have been talking about this for 30 years under Democrats, Republicans—both political parties at various times over the last 30 years—because Senator PORTMAN is right. Other nations are now investing at a level much greater than ours. So this record of a \$550 billion investment in hard infrastructure over 5 years has never been done before.

Senator MANCHIN often pointed out, as we were sometimes feuding and fighting over some of the details, that no pothole ever decided it was only going to hit a Democrat or a Republican. It hit everybody's cars.

We all know we have got thousands of bridges that need to be repaired. We all know that, post-COVID, high-speed broadband is not a “nice to have”; it is a necessity. We all know too many Americans go without access to clean drinking water.

This legislation will be debated and, I hope, passed in a strong bipartisan way. We will show our country, and we will show the world that no country around the world can keep up with us when we make these kind of investments.

I thank my colleagues.

With that, I yield to my great friend, the Senator from Maine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

H.R. 3684

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, let me begin my remarks this evening by expressing my appreciation to Senators PORTMAN and SINEMA for their extraordinary leadership of our group, our bipartisan group, of 10 Senators, who have labored so hard to bring before the Senate the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

This legislation represents the most significant investment in our infrastructure since the construction of the Interstate Highway System. Think about that. For generations, for decades, we have talked about the need to rebuild our roads and our bridges, our airports, our seaports, our waterways, our water treatment systems, and, today, to expand high-speed internet access to Americans throughout our country no matter where they live—whether they are in the northern regions of Maine or an inner city neighborhood—and that is exactly what this legislation would do.

I want to just quickly give an example from my own State of Maine.

Maine has 315 bridges and nearly 1,500 miles of roads that are rated as being in poor condition. Now the State of Maine will have the funding that will enable it to make major investments in the repair and replacement of this critical infrastructure. I am particularly pleased that the legislation includes \$65 billion to expand access to broadband.

And I want to thank my colleague Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN, who worked so closely with me. We were partners in this endeavor, and this is going to make such a difference to students who are doing online courses, to seniors who want access to telemedicine, to individuals who are able to work from home, but none of that is possible without access to high-speed internet services.

I am very pleased to be part of this group, and I am also delighted to demonstrate to the American people that we can work across the aisle in a bipartisan way to achieve real results that matter to the people of this country.

I yield to the Senator from New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

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H.R. 3684

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am very proud to be here with the rest of my colleagues to present this bill that will make the biggest investment in infrastructure, as Senator COLLINS said so well, since the Interstate Highway System back in the 1950s.

This is really an extraordinary work product that results from the leadership of Senators SINEMA and PORTMAN and from the cooperation of everybody on this floor. There were an equal number of Democrats and Republicans—a number who are not here tonight who have worked on this bill—the work of

committee chairs and ranking members in the Senate who have done so much to put together underlying bills that we used in moving this forward and, of course, all of the staff from our personal offices, from the Appropriations Committee, from all of the committees that worked on this bill.

As has been said, this is the biggest investment in infrastructure with \$550 million—billion in new spending over the next 5 years. It builds on annual appropriations. It is an investment in roads and bridges, in water and wastewater, and transit, the electric grid.

We have got to do this because right now we are investing less than our competitors—less than China, less than India, less than Europe; less than we were spending in the United States in the 1960s. And if we are going to stay competitive, if we are going to provide opportunities for the people in this country, we have got to make these investments.

As my partner in broadband said, if kids are going to have an equal opportunity for the future, then they need to have access to high-speed internet.

More important, I think, is the point that all of my colleagues so far have made, and that is that this bill shows that Republicans and Democrats can work together to address the needs of this country; that our government is not broken. We can make it work if everybody works together.

So I know we have a lot of work ahead of us to get this bill through the floor of the Senate and then through the House, and get the help out to the American people. But I know that in this Chamber we are committed to getting that done and to making sure that we make these investments to move the country forward.

So thank you, Mr. President.

I yield to my colleague from Alaska, Senator MURKOWSKI.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. KAINE). The Senator from Alaska.

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H.R. 3684

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, it is indeed a pleasure to be on the floor, even though it is a little bit late on a Sunday evening, but to be here with colleagues that we have spent probably more time with one another than we have with our families, our spouses, our roommates, and what have you. But we have been working to build a product not only that we are proud to stand behind but a product that I believe the American public will be proud of the work that we have put into this—work not just of this group but, again, the broader group of 22.

And also we recognize the very solid work that comes from our committees. We recognize all that was built at the committee level to help kick-start in so many different—in so many different—areas, but also to build the base of much of this infrastructure bill that we have in front of us today.

My friend and colleague from West Virginia, Senator MANCHIN, the chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee—when we started to sit down and focus on what we were going to do with infrastructure, the necessity for a power piece was important. It was critical to what we were building. And so the committee went to work, put together, I think, a good product that moved out of the committee on a bipartisan basis, and that served as really the base for the title that is part of this measure, building on the energy act that we moved out of this body last year.

So the work that has gone into it has been a collaborative process throughout the way—very much an iterative process, as I might add, as well.

But I think we recognize that the good, solid work that has been put into this to date is just really the beginning of bringing in more of the efforts and input from our colleagues from this body from around the country.

You know, when you think about infrastructure, infrastructure connects us. Infrastructure brings us together. And so whether you are from a rural State, like mine, or from an urban State, like the occupant of the Chair, when we are able to move safely and efficiently, when we are able to communicate affordably and quickly and efficiently, when we are able to ensure that our systems are all working together, this is what makes us the strong, competitive Nation that we are.

So there is extraordinary policy in this product, but the process that has gotten us here this evening is one that, while hard and arduous, as the Senator from Arizona has noted, this is what we come here to do. We have come here to do the hard work, to do the necessary work. And tonight we are at that place where we can begin to take up the infrastructure product that we have been working on for months now and what the country is waiting for deserves.

With that, I turn to my friend and colleague from West Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

H.R. 3684

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues. This has been the most enjoyable venture for the last 6 to 8 weeks.

So many people have given up on the Senate. They have given up on Congress. They have given up on our ability to be able to do the big things.

This is big. This is a big deal. And I don't care who is looking at it any way they can, it has been said that nothing like this has been done in 30 years. It hasn't. We have all talked about it. We all knew it.

Senator WARNER said that, basically, potholes and bridges don't have names. They don't have Republican and Democrat identification. It will hurt us all, and it has.

It is something that every administration for the past four to five administrations knew had to be done, and they didn't because this is hard. It is not easy.

They call us a deliberative body. This is true to what deliberation is about: to come to an agreement. And it takes an awful lot of time, a lot of patience, and a lot of effort. We did that.

And when you think about it, having Majority Leader CHUCK SCHUMER and the leader of the Republican Party, MITCH MCCONNELL, vote for this piece of legislation, that says a lot about it; that it is needed. The American people are speaking loud and clear. The polls are overwhelming, whether it is Democrat, Republican, Independent—they could care less. They want their infrastructure repaired.

Let's rebuild America. We talk about it a lot. And when you think about this, this is the largest long-term jobs program that we have done—that we have ever done—for an awful long time.

They talk about, basically, that the economy is soaring now, and they figure it will taper off and maybe even go down. This will prevent that from happening. These are great jobs. In every city, in every part of the country, in every State in America, great jobs are going to be available for people who want good-paying, high-skill jobs with benefits.

This is the bill that will do it for them, and this will keep us going from 5 to 10 years, not just 1 year. It is not just a "one blip" on the radar screen and we are done. This is for 5 to 10 years, and we can continue to build on it.

There are only a few things that bring us together as Americans, that bring us together as Congress, that we all gather around. One is the military. I have never seen a military piece of legislation or NDAA that we all didn't rally around and pass, whether Democrat or Republican. We knew it had to be done for the sake of our country. And infrastructure is the second. I have never seen anything so popular as infrastructure.

People say: Oh, JOE, we need it done. And these are people that might be hardcore left or hardcore right. They could care less. They want their infrastructure. They want their roads. They want their children safe on the buses. They want to be able to travel and communicate.

They want internet service, if you live in Maine or if you live in rural Alaska or you live in rural West Virginia or New Hampshire or Virginia or Louisiana or Utah and also in Ohio. Wherever you may be, they want it. They want to be able to communicate and compete for the jobs of the 21st century.

This is largest investment in clean drinking water and wastewater infrastructure in American history—the largest. It is the largest dedicated bridge investment since the construction of the interstate highway system.

It is the largest investment in clean energy transmission and infrastructure in the history of our country. It is the largest Federal investment in passenger rail since the creation of Amtrak. Think about that. Think of what I just said. It is the largest we have ever done. This is something.

Now, I have always said that the best politics is good government. We do something good, and we can all take credit for it. I have seen people take credit for things they voted against when it was so good. This is one they can. They can say it is going to be great, go home, you will enjoy it.

I can tell you also what the deliberative body that we are and the greatest deliberative body in the world. By deliberation, it brings us together. We know each other. We know each other's families. We care about each other. We don't look at each as Democrat or Republican. These are my friends, my individual friends, who I think basically would have my back at any time of the day and I would have theirs.

This is what brings us—this is what people want. They want to see us work. And I want to thank—I will thank—Majority Leader CHUCK SCHUMER. He has been adamant about let's pass this bill. Hurry up. Now, he has pushed us a little bit faster sometimes, but it is deliberation. We got through it. But he wanted the bill to happen.

And I think, really—I think deep down—that MITCH MCCONNELL wants the bill. He has voted for it. He wants it too.

So when you have both leaders pushing for it on both sides of the aisle, this is something that is going to get across the line, and I really believe very strongly in it.

It includes the energy infrastructure act that passed the ENR, with Senator MURKOWSKI, then as the majority, as the chairman of Energy and Natural Resources. We worked on it together—a great piece of legislation.

We are talking about energy that is going to be making and keeping America energy independent, but doing it cleaner than at any time in the world, anyplace in the world. We are going to be the leader for the world. You can't eliminate your way to a clean environment, but you can innovate your way. That is what this bill has.

It has the commitment to research and development that will define basically the way that we can clean up the climate, which we are all responsible for.

So I am very proud to be part of this and proud of all of you, my colleagues, that I have worked with and I think the world of.

This is something we should be proud of. This is a give-and-take proposition. Nobody got what they wanted; everybody got what we needed. And that is the most important thing.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Now, I yield to my good friend from Louisiana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.